



NEWS RELEASE

GOVERNOR'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

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BREDESEN DETAILS LEGISLATION TO EXPAND HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED CARE FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED

CONSUMER CHOICE, SIMPLIFIED PROCESS AND COORDINATED CARE DRIVE NEW PROPOSAL

NASHVILLE - Governor Phil Bredesen today outlined details of the "Long-Term Care Community Choices Act of 2008," the state's plan to simplify access to home and community-based services and increase the number of people able to stay at home for long-term care needs. In his State of the State address, Bredesen marked this as the year to deliver on his promise to expand alternatives to nursing homes for elderly and physically disabled residents through the TennCare program, the state's largest single payer of long-term care services.

"This legislation fundamentally restructures how long-term care is handled in the TennCare program," said Bredesen. "Health care is hard enough to manage when you're young and healthy. If you're older and sick, or have a family member who is, you shouldn't be forced to navigate a complex web of services. There should be a simple process that will create a richer set of choices. That's what the Long-Term Care Act is designed to do."

Over the past month, TennCare officials held more than two dozen working sessions and informational meetings with more than 20 key stakeholder groups and worked side by side with the bi-partisan Long-Term Care legislative study committee to solicit input on needed changes to the long-term care system.

Key components of the "Long-Term Care Community Choices Act of 2008" include:

Consumer Choice and Options

- Create consumer-directed care options, including the ability to hire non-traditional providers like family members, friends and neighbors with accountability for taxpayer funds
- Broaden residential care choices in the community beyond nursing facilities with new options such as companion care, family care homes and improved access to assisted care living facilities

Simplified Process for Accessing Services

- Streamline the member's eligibility process for faster service delivery and the enrollment process for new providers
- Maintain a single point of entry for people who are not on TennCare today and need access to long-term care services through Medicaid or other available programs
- Use existing Medicaid funds to serve more people in cost-effective home and community settings

"Whole-person" Care Coordination Approach

- Designate one entity to coordinate all of the care a TennCare member needs including medical, behavioral and long-term care

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- Implement active transition and diversion programs for people who can be safely and effectively cared for at home or in another community setting outside the nursing home
- Install an electronic visit verification system to monitor home care quality

"I'm pleased with the candid and thorough input from the stakeholders and legislators closest to this issue. It will take all of those invested in reforming long-term care working together throughout this legislative process to bring more services to more elderly and disabled Tennesseans at home," Bredesen said.

The Long-Term Care Community Choices Act of 2008 must be voted on by the General Assembly and signed into law before becoming effective.

TennCare is Tennessee's managed care Medicaid program serving 1.2 million members, including 620,000 children, with an annual budget of \$7 billion.

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